

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AF-10 EUR-25 SS-14 PM-09 NSC-10 CIAE-00

INR-09 NSAE-00 RSC-01 T-03 GAC-01 SAJ-01 OMB-01 RSR-01

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R 191150 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO CINCUSAFE

USCINCEUR

SECDEF WASHDC

JCS

SECSTATE WASHDC 1527

S E C R E T TEHRAN 1763

E. O. 11652: XGDS3

TAGS: MARR

SUBJECT: MEDITERRANEAN AERO STATION

REF: A. CINCUSAFE 220901 Z FEB 73 (NOTAL);

2. ARMISH/ MAAG 170701 Z MAR 73 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED: MISSION HAS BEEN ASKED BY CINCUSAFE TO DETERMINE ON FEASIBILITY BASIS WHETHER GOI WOULD ACCEPT AERONAUTICAL STATION NEAR TEHRAN. WE SUGGEST THIS MATTER BE DROPPED UNLESS THERE ARE COMPELLING REASONS TO CONTRARY. END SUMMARY.

1. ARMISH/ MAAG REFTEL REPORTED TRANSFER TO EMBASSY OF ACTION ON CINCUSAFE REQUEST FOR DETERMINATION WHETHER GOI WOULD PERMIT LOCATION OF AERONAUTICAL STATION (AS) NEAR TEHRAN. STATION CLAIMS TO PROVIDE GROUND TO AIR COMMUNICATIONS AND AIR ROUTE TRAFFIC CONTROL FOR ALL USAF AIR OPERATIONS AND SECURE COMMUNICATIONS FOR SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHEN THEY ARE ABOARD SPECIAL AIR MISSION AIRCRAFT. TWO SITES, POSSIBLY 20 MILES APART AND OCCUPYING ABOUT 180 AND 100 ACRES RESPECTIVELY, WOULD BE REQUIRED. 50-60 USAF PERSONNEL WOULD BE ASSIGNED TO
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FACILITY. SECURITY WOULD BE PROVIDED IH PERIMETER GUARD AND ACCESS TO SITES WOULD BE LIMITED ONLY TO US NATIONAL CLEARED FOR SECRET.

2. CINCUSAFE STRESSES THAT REQUEST IS STRICTLY A FEASIBILITY PROBLEM. HOWEVER, EVEN ON THIS BASIS, ONLY PERSON IN GOI WHO COULD GIVE DECISION WOULD BE SHAH. WE DO NOT BELIEVE APPROACH SHOULD BE MADE BY AMBASSADOR UNTIL FOLLOWING IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS HAVE BEEN WEIGHED BY DOD AND STATE:

A. AMONG THE SEVERAL US FACILITIES IN IRAN, INCLUDING VERY SENSITIVE INSTALLATIONS, THERE IS NONE WHICH COULD BE DESCRIBED AS " US BASE", I. E. NONE IS LIMITED EXCLUSIVELY TO US PERSONNEL. AFTER HAVING MANAGED FOR SO MANY YEARS TO OPERATE IN COLLABORATION WITH IRANIANS AT SUCH INSTALLATIONS, WE DO NOT THINK THIS IS TIME TO START INTRODUCING " US NATIONAL ONLY" FACILITY.

B. BECAUSE THIS WOULD NOT BE AS EASY A QUESTION FOR GOI AS IT MIGHT APPEAR TO OUTSIDERS, WE DO NOT THINK AMBASSADOR SHOULD BE ASKED TO MAKE APPROACH ON HYPOTHETICAL BASIS. WE NOTE THAT TWO OTHER COUNTRIES ARE BEING CONSIDERED FOR AS. IT WOULD NOT BE WISE TO EXPEND EFFORT AND CREDIT WITH SHAH UNLESS THERE WERE

REASONABLE CERTAINTY AS WOULD BE ESTABLISHED IN IRAN SHOULD HE APPROVE REQUEST.

C. THIRDLY, WITH BUILDUP IN TAFT PERSONNEL LARGE AMERICAN PRESENCE IN TEHRAN WILL DRAW INCREASING COMMENT FROM ELEMENTS UNFAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARDS US- IRANIAN COOPERATION. WE BELIEVE ASSIGNMENT OF US PERSONNEL SHOULD BE HELD TO ABSOLUTE MINIMUM REQUIRED FOR PERFORMANCE OF ESSENTIAL TASKS.

3. FOR FOREGOING REASONS, WE WOULD PREFER NOT TO APPROACH SHAH FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF AS UNLESS IT IS DETERMINED THAT GEOGRAPHY OF IRAN IS A CRITICAL CONSIDERATION OR NO OTHER COUNTRY OFFERS A FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVE LOCATION. IF SO, WE WOULD HAVE TO DEVISE SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR AS SIMILAR TO OTHER US FACILITIES HERE (PARA 2 A). WE SUGGEST THIS MATTER BE DROPPED UNLESS THERE ARE COMPELLING REASONS TO CONTRARY.
HELMS

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